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Collaborative Partnership on Forests Framework 2003

Information document

Summary

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests consists of 14 international organizations, bodies and convention secretariats that have substantial programmes on forests. The main objectives of the Partnership are to support the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and its member countries and to enhance cooperation and coordination among Partnership members on forest-related activities.

The Collaborative Partnership on Forests Framework 2003 represents both the work plan and the annual progress report of the Partnership. It focuses on joint Partnership initiatives, as well as Partnership members' support for the implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) proposals for action and the multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests.

Since its establishment, the Partnership has embarked on four collective activities or joint initiatives: the establishment of an online searchable database on funding sources for sustainable forest management; work to streamline reporting on forests; efforts to foster a common understanding of forest-related definitions; and information dissemination through the Partnership web site. Furthermore, the Partnership and its member organizations work individually and jointly to implement IPF/IFF proposals for action targeted at international organizations. Partnership members also contribute, through their various programmes and projects, to the implementation of many proposals for action that are targeted at countries.

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I. Introduction

1. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests was established in 2001 to support the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and its member countries and to enhance cooperation and coordination among Partnership members on forest issues. The Partnership consists of 14 major forest-related international organizations, secretariats of conventions and institutions.

2. At its first session, the Forum invited the Partnership to report on its progress at each session of the Forum. In response, the Partnership decided that it would report annually on its activities to the Forum in a document entitled "Collaborative Partnership on Forests Framework". That annual report represents both the Partnership's work plan and its progress report. It is prepared as a collaborative effort by all Partnership members and is compiled with the assistance of the Forum secretariat. The first report was presented to the Forum at its second session.[1]

3. Collaborative Partnership on Forests Framework 2003 focuses on the Partnership's major initiatives carried out collectively: the Partnership sourcebook on funding sustainable forest management; its Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting; efforts to harmonize concepts, terminology and definitions; and outreach activities. It also provides an update on Partnership members' individual and joint activities in support of the Forum, especially regarding the implementation of the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) and efforts to enhance cooperation on forests. In addition, Framework 2003 highlights activities undertaken by Partnership members in response to Forum resolutions and decisions.

II. What is the Collaborative Partnership on Forests?

4. The Partnership is an innovative arrangement to foster increased cooperation and coordination on forests. It consists of 14 members (see box) that have substantial capacity, programmes and resources to support the United Nations Forum on Forests process, in particular the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action. It is widely recognized that no single body or organization has the capacity or mandate to respond to the multiple benefits and demands of forests in a comprehensive manner. Collectively, building on the comparative advantage of its various members, the Partnership supports the implementation of sustainable forest management worldwide.

Member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)

International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)[a]

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

Secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change

United Nations Secretariat (Department of Economic and Social Affairs)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF)

World Bank

World Conservation Union (IUCN)

[a] IUFRO joined the Partnership in March 2003.

5. The mission of the Partnership is to support the work of the Forum in promoting sustainable management of all types of forests and strengthening long-term political commitment to that end. The Partnership has adopted a focal agency system to help facilitate coordination of its work for each of the 16 Forum elements. Its terms of reference and working modalities are laid out in the Partnership policy document.[2]

6. The Partnership is chaired by the Assistant Director-General of the Forestry Department of FAO. It is serviced by the Forum secretariat, which is based at United Nations Headquarters. A number of Partnership members support the work of the Forum secretariat through secondments. During 2002, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, FAO and UNEP seconded senior staff to the Forum secretariat. In addition, ITTO has decided to second a staff to the Forum secretariat provided that funding can be secured.

7. All Partnership members actively participated in the second session of the Forum. During the session, a one-day high-level policy dialogue was organized in which the heads of Partnership member organizations and ministers in charge of forests discussed a number of pressing issues for the international forest community.

In addition, several Partnership members organized side events to further highlight their forest-related activities, such as a GEF forest round table.

8. All Partnership members contribute to the drafting of official documents for Forum sessions. The World Bank, FAO and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as focal agencies for elements of the third session of the Forum, prepared the reports of the Secretary-General for discussion at the session.[3]

III. Joint initiatives of the Partnership

9. Since its establishment, the Partnership has embarked on four collective activities or joint initiatives: an online searchable database on funding sources for sustainable forest management, work to streamline reporting on forests; efforts to foster a common understanding of forest-related definitions; and information dissemination through the Partnership web site.

Partnership sourcebook on funding sustainable forest management

10. Although funds for sustainable forest management are available from a wide range of sources, fund seekers frequently do not have access to information on the sources of funds and guidance for applying for funding. To address that need, the Partnership developed a web site, including a searchable database that provides information on sources of funds for sustainable forest management, funding policies and delivery mechanisms of bilateral donors, international organizations, development banks, private sector entities and other relevant bodies. The sourcebook also provides information on trends in funding sustainable forest management, fund-raising and development of project proposals. It was launched on the Partnership web site[4] in December 2002. The Partnership has committed itself to further developing and promoting the use of the sourcebook, through, for example, side events and workshops.

Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting

11. Countries have expressed concern over the increasing number of requests to report to international and regional bodies and instruments. In its resolution 2/1, the Forum invited Partnership members to work to harmonize and streamline forest-related reporting to reduce the reporting burden on countries.

12. In July 2002, the Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting was established in order to respond to the Forum's request. The Task Force is co-chaired by FAO and the Forum secretariat. Other members include ITTO, UNEP and the secretariats of the Conventions on Biological Diversity, Desertification and Climate Change. A major part of all national reporting on forests to international organizations and instruments is submitted to the seven organizations represented on the Task Force. Since its establishment, the task force has held two meetings, on 19 and 20 November 2002 in Bonn and from 24 to 26 February 2003 in Cambridge, United Kingdom.

13. As its first activity, the Task Force launched a web-based "portal"[5] that provides easy access to national reports submitted to its member organizations, the corresponding reporting formats, key information on related efforts regarding reporting, and information on the work of the Task Force. The portal is intended to

assist countries in their forest-related reporting efforts by serving as an easily accessible source of national information on forests.

14. Through comparative analyses of all the reporting requirements of member organizations, the Task Force identified opportunities to reduce the reporting burden on countries, including the potential for joint requests from its members for information on forest resources, services and policy and institutional frameworks. A similar effort, the joint forest sector questionnaire, has been successfully used for collection of data on forest products by the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), FAO, ITTO and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). In the long term, members have envisaged a joint information management system and depository for information, available online.

15. Streamlining of reporting to conventions and instruments on actions taken against commitments is more challenging, at least in the short term. Members are currently collaborating to identify where areas of overlap occur so that they can draw countries' attention to existing relevant information, and thus help them avoid duplication of effort. The long-term vision is for joint thematic information requests, possibly even a joint questionnaire between certain processes.

16. The supporting activities for streamlining efforts include joint efforts in capacity-building; improving the maintenance and accessibility of focal points; continuing efforts to harmonize definitions and include definitions in the information requests; working towards improved information management and sharing of data; and shortening, rephrasing and cross-referencing questionnaires.

Harmonizing forest-related definitions

17. In its resolution 2/2, the Forum invited the Partnership to continue its work on fostering a common understanding of concepts, terminology and definitions, and to submit a progress report to the Forum at its third session.

18. The Partnership is committed to this task and has made good progress on the matter since the second session of the Forum. As a follow-up to the expert meeting on harmonizing forest-related definitions for use by various stakeholders, held in January 2002 (see Partnership Framework 2002), a second expert meeting was jointly organized by FAO and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in collaboration with CIFOR, IUFRO and UNEP, at FAO headquarters in Rome from 11 to 13 September 2002. The meeting reiterated the need for a common understanding of, and harmonization between, the forest-related definitions of core terms used by different international processes and instruments in order to reduce errors in employing terms; the reporting burden and related costs to countries; and confusion in communicating with the media and the public at large. The meeting compared a number of forest-related definitions used in reporting to international processes and organizations and identified potentials for harmonization. It recommended that the individual entities concerned continue to work together to harmonize the terms. The reports of the two meetings have been widely distributed.[6]

Partnership web site, promotional material and other outreach activities

19. The Partnership web site was launched in December 2002.[7] It contains information about the Partnership, its activities and the Partnership Network. The

web site was developed in close cooperation with all Partnership members, with inputs from the Forum secretariat and the technical support of FAO.

20. The Partnership held a side event on 28 May 2002 during the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Bali, Indonesia. The event highlighted the activities of the Partnership and its possible role as a model for inter-agency cooperation in other sectors. The Partnership plans to organize a side event at the third session of the Forum and at the World Forestry Congress (Quebec, September 2003).

21. The Partnership has also produced a flyer and display material on the partnership.

IV. Collaborative and individual support of Partnership members for the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action and for enhanced cooperation on forests

22. The Partnership and its member organizations also work individually and jointly to implement IPF/IFF proposals for action that are directly targeted at Partnership members and/or international organizations in general. Partnership members also provide support to countries in the implementation of proposals for action through their various programmes and projects.

23. An overview of Partnership members' activities related to the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, organized by the 16 Forum elements, is set out below.

Formulation and implementation of national forest programmes

24. FAO is the focal agency for this element within the Partnership. Two major initiatives by Partnership members are specifically targeted at support to national forest programmes — the Programme on Forests (PROFOR) and the National Forest Programme Facility. PROFOR, hosted by the World Bank, has been working in Cameroon, Costa Rica, Guyana, Malawi and Viet Nam. The National Forest Programme Facility, hosted by FAO, is a partnership of bilateral donors and international organizations that supports Partnership countries and their interest groups, through grants, to further national forest programmes through global knowledge management initiatives. Three Partnership members, FAO, CIFOR and the World Bank, are members of the Facility's steering committee. Recent developments and planned activities by the Facility include:

(a) Disseminating information on the Facility worldwide, including on its criteria and procedures for partnerships with interested countries;

(b) Providing a web site that has links to national databases and home pages for easy access to information on national forest programmes globally;

(c) Active work with country partners to support the development and implementation of national forest programmes.

25. In November 2002, FAO organized a technical meeting on enhancing stakeholder participation in national forest programmes. One of the outcomes was the establishment of a community of practice on participatory approaches in national

forest programmes, which is also supported by the Facility. In addition, FAO is currently undertaking studies on financial strategies and mechanisms to support national forest programmes, initially focusing on Latin America. And in September 2002, FAO convened a technical meeting on cross-sectoral policy impacts between forestry and other sectors, which identified ways to foster cross-sectoral synergies.

26. In 2004, a country-led initiative in support of the Forum will be organized to address decentralization, federal systems in forestry and national forest programmes. The initiative is sponsored by the Governments of Switzerland and Indonesia, and supported by CIFOR and the Forum secretariat.

Promoting public participation

27. Partnership members work at two levels to encourage public participation — at the international level to provide for stakeholder participation in forest-related policy dialogues, and at the national level to support country efforts in advancing participatory processes in forest policy, planning and management. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs is the focal agency at the international level and UNDP at the national level.

28. During 2002, the Department facilitated the participation of major groups, through multi-stakeholder dialogues, panels and round tables, in intergovernmental processes of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, including the Forum and the Summit and its preparatory meetings. The Forum secretariat facilitated a consultation in Rome in March 2003 among the focal points of major groups for the planning of the multi-stakeholder dialogue at the third session of the Forum. The focal points made proposals that would lead to a more effective and interactive exchange and views on substantial issues being addressed at the session.

29. Similarly, the Conventions on Biological Diversity, to Combat Desertification and on Climate Change, GEF, ITTO and UNEP also encouraged input of civil society in their deliberations during the past year. Through ITTC decision 2 (XXXII), the ITTO Civil Society Advisory Group was established to facilitate the contribution of civil society to the work of ITTO in the same manner as the existing ITTO Trade Advisory Group. The new forest policy and strategy of the World Bank was developed, in close consultation with various different stakeholders groups.

30. UNDP has a rich and active history of engaging with a wide array of civil society organizations as key partners in reducing poverty and improving development effectiveness. Through the UNDP Civil Society Advisory Committee, UNDP has established a strong framework for partnering with civil society organizations at all levels, from global campaigns, such as pursuing the Millennium Development Goals, to national initiatives, such as pro-poor budgeting exercises.

31. At the national level, CIFOR promotes participatory action research to facilitate collaborative management involving local communities and other forest stakeholders. FAO promotes public participation through providing support to the development and implementation of participatory processes and their integration into national forest programmes, including within the framework of the National Forest Programme Facility. A technical meeting on enhancing stakeholder participation in the Facility was organized by FAO in November 2002 to identify strategic ways to strengthen participatory processes in national forest programmes and to build partnerships for action. IUCN is also engaged in promoting public

participation at the national level, such as through a project on public involvement in forest management in the Russian Federation.

Deforestation and forest degradation

32. UNEP is the focal agency for this element; however, almost all Partnership members have activities related to combating deforestation and forest degradation. UNEP continues to work on activities related to combating desertification in different regions.

33. ITTO Objective 2000, which supports countries' commitment to moving as rapidly as possible towards achieving exports of tropical timber and timber products from sustainably managed sources, have been intensified through the dispatch of ITTO Objective 2000 missions to the Central African Republic, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the development of an action plan for achieving the Objective in Congo.

34. The expanded programme of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity on forest biological diversity, agreed upon at the sixth meeting of its Conference of the Parties in April 2002, includes relevant activities geared towards reducing deforestation and forest degradation from global, regional and local threats.

35. IUCN will be actively involved in the African Forest Law Enforcement and Governance process, leading to a ministerial meeting in April 2003. IUCN has been designated the facilitator of civil society participation in eastern, West and southern Africa, and is collaborating with the United Kingdom Department for International Development in organizing a private-sector preparatory workshop. Those processes will help to strengthen capacity in developing countries to address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation through strengthening forest law enforcement and good governance by, inter alia, encouraging broader participation, exchanging relevant research results and lessons learned from existing local and national initiatives, and identifying policy instruments and other strategies for combating those problems at different levels.

Traditional forest-related knowledge

36. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is the focal agency for traditional forest-related knowledge. The Convention's expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity includes six activities aimed directly at the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity by indigenous and local communities. The Convention secretariat is currently preparing a report on sustainable use of forest biological diversity, including traditional forest-related knowledge. The report will be discussed at the ninth meeting of the Convention's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), in November 2003.

37. Where applicable, all other Partnership members take into account the importance and relevance of traditional forest-related knowledge in policy and project activities.

Forest-related scientific knowledge

38. CIFOR and ICRAF are the focal agencies for this Forum element. CIFOR works to improve the scientific basis for sustainable forest management and

improvement of livelihoods. In so doing and through other targeted activities, it aims to strengthen national capacities for forest-related research. The primary focus of ICRAF is the generation, synthesis and dissemination of knowledge related to agroforestry. The majority of ICRAF's resources and those of its partners are directed towards agroforestry research and development to solve the problems of poverty, food insecurity and environmental degradation in sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and South-East Asia.

39. IUFRO's most important asset is its worldwide network of scientific expertise on forests and trees. In addition, IUFRO has established special programmes and projects and task forces that can support the work of the Partnership and the Forum, especially in satisfying the need for research-based information and knowledge.

40. FAO provides support to forest research networks, carries out policy-related research, comprehensive international forest resource assessments and regional forest outlook studies, and provides a wide array of forest-related knowledge through a variety of publications, information systems and databases. The Convention on Climate Change works closely with IPCC, which studies the causes and impacts of climate change, including on forests. ITTO supports research and development studies and projects to improve understanding of the marketplace, the efficiency of production processing, industrial utilization and forest management in the context of both existing forest and reforestation initiatives. UNEP monitors environmental trends through environmental assessments and early warning systems.

Forest health and productivity

41. FAO is the focal agency for this Forum element and prepared the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2003/5). Some efforts have been made by Partnership members to assist countries to address the negative effects of transboundary air pollution. Partnership members are more actively involved, however, in other aspects of forest health and productivity, including the emerging issues of wildfires, pests and diseases, and invasive species.

42. There is considerable collaboration between Partnership members in the areas of wildfires. Two members, FAO and IUCN, together with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), are exploring approaches to promote the participation of local communities in fire management and forest fire prevention. UNEP, FAO and the World Bank are involved in the Working Group on Wildland Fires, which operates under the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction. In June 2002, the Working Group and the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) established joint regional wildland fire networks to intensify collaboration and information exchange globally between forest fire experts. CIFOR, FAO, ITTO and IUCN collaborate in the network, together with WWF and a number of Governments, donors and other stakeholders. The growing awareness and concern about forest fires has led international organizations, including FAO and ITTO, to strengthen support for forest-fire management in developing countries. FAO guidelines on forest fire management in temperate and boreal forests, issued in November 2002, complement related ITTO work on tropical forests. In addition, FAO, ECE and the International Labour Organization (ILO) are organizing a conference on forest fire management and international cooperation in fire emergencies in the eastern Mediterranean, the

Balkans and adjoining regions of the Near East and Central Asia (Antalya, Turkey 15-19 April 2003).

43. IUCN works in cooperation with CIFOR, FAO and WWF, with the support of the European Union (EU) and the United States Forest Service, on Project Fire-Fight South-East Asia, which seeks to secure the necessary policy reform at the national and regional level within South-East Asia to provide a legislative and economic basis for controlling harmful anthropogenic forest fires. The model provided by the Project will be extended to South and Central America, the Russian Federation, the Mediterranean and sub-Saharan Africa as funds and capacity become available. IUCN is also cooperating with ITTO in this area, with a focus on South-East Asia, West Africa and the northern Andes.

44. ITTO is making available the service of forest-fire experts to assist tropical timber producing countries that need assistance. ITTO and FAO will support the Third International Wildland Fire Conference and Summit, to be held in Sydney in October 2003.

45. FAO collects and disseminates information related to wildfires, and responds to emergency requests from countries for their control. It published the *Global Forest Fires Assessment 1990-2000*, including profiles on more than 50 countries, and issued a report on the legal framework for forest fire management in June 2002.

46. At the sixth meeting of its Conference of Parties, the Convention on Biological Diversity invited FAO and ITTO, along with other organizations, to explore options for a joint work programme with the Convention on fire impact assessments, as well as fire management and prevention approaches.

47. Until 2002, FAO was the only Partnership member directly and actively involved with global forest pest management; however, ICRAF has recently created a post for a pathologist. FAO provides direct technical assistance to countries in response to requests from Governments related to forest pest problems.

48. Article 8 of the Convention calls on Governments to prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species. FAO provides documents and information to the Convention on issues related to invasive species that affect forest biological diversity. IUCN also works actively on the issue of invasive species through its Invasive Species Specialist Group.

49. FAO, with the cooperation of experts from member countries, is compiling data for a global information system on insect pest and disease outbreaks and their impact on forests, in order to help increase awareness of the severe problems related to forest pests worldwide. FAO is also a depository for the International Plant Protection Convention.

Criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management

50. FAO and ITTO are focal agencies for this element. Several Partnership members (FAO, ITTO, CIFOR, IUCN, UNEP, the Convention on Biological Diversity, GEF and IUFRO) have been involved in work on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management over the past decade. Major goals include providing support to the regional criteria and indicator processes, the development

and use of criteria and indicators at the national and forest management unit level, and fostering collaboration between countries and between processes.

51. Partnership members are also collaborating to strengthen international work on criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and to increase cooperation and coordination among the processes. FAO and ITTO were among the co-sponsors of the International Conference on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management: the Way Forward, which was held from 3 to 7 February 2003 in Guatemala City. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Guatemala and supported by the Governments of the United States and Finland. The Conference recommended a wide range of actions for consideration by countries and international bodies, including Partnership, to strengthen the elaboration and application of criteria and indicators; promote political commitment; strengthen institutional capacity; and to contribute towards the work of the Forum and international initiatives on indicators related to sustainable development.

52. FAO continues to provide technical and financial support to a number of criteria and indicator processes, including those of dry-zone Africa, the Near East, Tarapoto, Lepatérique, and dry forests in Asia. FAO has assisted many processes and countries by developing practical guidelines on the measurement and assessment of criteria and indicators and their testing and field-level implementation. It is currently supporting low forest cover countries' activities on the validation of existing criteria and indicators, as well as activities for model and demonstration forests in Asia, Africa and the Americas. It also participates in and collaborates actively with the Pan-European and Montreal Processes. FAO also plans to structure future global forest resources assessments on the thematic areas based on existing sets of criteria that are common to the nine ongoing processes on criteria and indicators.

53. Several ITTO projects involve the adaptation of the ITTO criteria and indicators to national conditions and the testing of their application. All 31 producer member countries are committed to the ITTO criteria and indicators. In addition, the African Timber Organization (ATO) criteria and indicators have been harmonized with those of ITTO. An ITTO project to promote the use of those harmonized criteria and indicators is being implemented. ITTO is also currently conducting national-level workshops to train forest managers in the effective use of the ITTO reporting format for criteria and indicators. During 2002, training workshops on the application of ITTO criteria and indicators were conducted in several member countries, including the Congo, the Philippines, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. Many member countries are now submitting reports using the ITTO reporting format, which will be used in the compilation of the status of tropical forest management report in 2003/2004.

54. UNEP has provided support to the dry-zone Africa and other processes, including regional initiatives by Southern African Development Community and Comité inter-état pour la lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel countries. CIFOR has focused primarily on assisting in the development of criteria and indicators at the forest management unit level. IUFRO, with the support of CIFOR, FAO and the Centro Agrenómico Tropical de Investigatión y Enseânza, organized an expert meeting on capacity-building for forest scientists in Latin America, on the theme "Criteria and indicators, auditing of sustainable forest management and forest certification" in Costa Rica in April 2003.

55. The Convention on Biological Diversity and GEF are involved in supporting the development of indicators for biological diversity. The Convention's expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity recognized the existing criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and the need for the further development of indicators for forest biological diversity and their use for the assessment of the status and trends of forest biological diversity. The Convention convened an expert group meeting in February 2003 that focused on the principles for developing national-level indicators for monitoring purposes, and provided advice on suitable indicators for each thematic area relevant to the Convention, including forests.

Economic, social and cultural aspects of forests

56. The World Bank, as the focal agency for the economic aspects of forests, has prepared the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2003/7). CIFOR is the focal agency for the social and cultural aspects of forests.

57. CIFOR is currently actively engaged, along with ICRAF and IUCN, in the Rain Forest Challenge, which will focus on the landscape level and bring research and development together. In addition, one of the key events marking the tenth anniversary of CIFOR was a conference on rural livelihoods, forests and biodiversity held in Bonn in May 2003.

58. The Convention's expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity addresses the institutional and socio-economic enabling environment for sustainable forest management. Further assessments on forest management practices that incorporate socio-economic and cultural values are being carried out as part of a Convention report on the sustainable use of forest biological diversity.

59. Much of UNDP work is relevant to economic, social and cultural issues as they affect human development. In particular, the UNDP poverty and environment initiative is geared towards helping countries to integrate the environmental concerns of the poor into poverty reduction strategies and policies, identify practical measures for their implementation and share their experience and good practices. The initiative provides a forum for practitioners, policy makers and researchers working in this area to share their experience and identify solutions.

Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forests and fragile ecosystems

60. UNEP is the focal agency for the element. UNEP/World Climate Monitoring Centre (WCMC) addresses this issue by providing a United Nations list of protected areas globally.

61. The Convention on Biological Diversity addresses this element in its expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity through the promotion of the conservation of forest biological diversity and adequate and effective protected forest area networks. It will convene an international workshop on forest-protected areas in Montreal in November 2003. IUCN and other Partnership members will be involved in the workshop.

62. IUCN and ITTO jointly organized a workshop on increasing the effectiveness of transboundary conservation areas in tropical forests, held from 17 to 21 February 2003 at Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand, with the participation of a number of

Partnership members. The workshop brought together practitioners involved in the implementation of the ITTO transboundary conservation reserves programme and experts from IUCN and other interested organizations. The total area of forest in transboundary conservation reserves and their immediate buffer areas under the programme increased from 1 million hectares (ha) in 2000 to almost 10 million ha at the end of 2002. It is hoped that the area could be expanded to 15 million ha by the end of 2003.

63. The fifth IUCN World Parks Congress will be held in Durban, South Africa, from 8 to 17 September 2003. Among other things, the Congress will showcase the involvement of local communities, trans-frontier initiatives, sustainable financing initiatives and management effectiveness. The Congress will initiate a process that will explore how protected areas can be more effectively employed in poverty reduction strategies and still conserve biological diversity.

64. UNDP work related to this element is linked to GEF-funded projects in forest conservation. Currently, UNDP is implementing 29 projects under GEF operational programme 3 (Forest ecosystems) in 27 countries. Various Partnership members are involved in a meso-America forest conservation project, supported by GEF, the World Bank and UNDP, among others, as well as the World Bank's corridor project in rain forest regions in Brazil.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions

65. FAO is the focal agency for this Forum element.

66. The major activities of Partnership members related to the IPF/IFF proposals for action and Forum resolutions related to this element are carried out by the Partnership Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting and by Partnership members efforts in harmonizing forest-related definitions (see paras. 11-18 above).

67. FAO and the Forum secretariat supported the Forum country-led initiative on lessons learned in the assessment of the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, which was hosted by Italy and co-sponsored by several countries and held in Viterbo from 17 to 20 March 2003. Several Partnership members participated in the initiative.

68. In addition, Partnership members are engaged in activities to implement and contribute to the national implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action that are related to monitoring, assessment and reporting on forests, including national and international forest assessments (the FAO *Global Forest Resources Assessment* (FRA 2000), maintaining databases (the FAO *Yearbook of Forest Products* and Non-Wood Forest Products Database, UNEP/WCMC's protected areas database, and IUFRO's database SilvaTerm), and capacity-building efforts.

Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover

69. UNEP is the focal agency for this Forum element. UNEP's programme of work is addressing the capacity needs of low forest cover countries for the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action, and to develop the capacity for policy development and strategies for sustainable forest management in low forest cover countries.

70. In its resolution 2/2, the Forum invited Partnership members to expedite their work on the definition on low forest cover. An expert meeting on harmonizing forest-related definitions for use by various stakeholders, held in September 2002, addressed that issue. It recognized that classifying a country as a low forest cover country may have political implications. The meeting therefore proposed that until the intended use of the term was clarified, a working definition of a low forest cover country could be a country in which forests — as defined by FRA — cover less than 10 per cent of its territory. The meeting stressed that many countries have large areas with low forest cover, although as national entities they would not be low forest cover countries.

71. UNDP implements a number of GEF-funded forest conservation projects in countries with low forest cover. Conservation and forest rehabilitation in such countries are also included in national, subregional and regional action programmes to combat desertification and to mitigate the adverse effects of drought under Convention to Combat Desertification requirements. The designation of land degradation as a focal area for GEF is envisaged to further enhance opportunities for countries with low forest cover. Land degradation, as defined in GEF, includes both desertification and deforestation.

72. The Convention on Biological Diversity is currently cooperating with the Convention to Combat Desertification through a joint work programme on dry and sub-humid lands. It includes concrete linkages between Convention on Biological Diversity activities and the various thematic areas under the Convention to Combat Desertification that address resource management and conservation in countries with low forest cover.

Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands and promotion of natural and planted forests

73. FAO, ICRAF and the Convention to Combat Desertification are the focal agencies for this Forum element.

74. UNEP and the secretariat of the Convention are collaborating on land degradation assessment in drylands, a project to provide standardized information and methodologies for land degradation assessment at the national, regional and global levels. GEF and FAO are also supporting the effort. Funding has been secured to expand the scope of the assessment to address the cross-cutting issues of land degradation, in response to recommendations made at a workshop held in Rome in December 2000. ITTO, in collaboration with FAO, CIFOR, IUCN and WWF International, has published guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests and is assisting member countries to enhance their capacities in those areas.

75. Examples of recent, ongoing and planned initiatives of Partnership members, working together with Governments and other international organizations and donors with regard to rehabilitation of natural and planted forests, include:

(a) Case studies (China, Thailand, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand and United States of America), a workshop (Philippines, April 2002) and a seminar (Mongolia, August 2002) organized by the Asia Pacific Forestry Commission on the impact of incentives on the development of plantation forest resources in the Asia and Pacific region, a collaborative effort between FAO,

the United States Agency for International Development, the European Community and Asia and Pacific countries;

(b) Publication in 2002 of guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests by ITTO, in collaboration with CIFOR, FAO, IUCN and WWF International. The guidelines will be promoted and tested in 2003-2004, including through six regional workshops;

(c) Case studies (Tunisia, Oman, Islamic Republic of Iran, Mali, Ethiopia and Namibia) and regional workshops organized on enhancing the role of planted forests, trees outside forests and urban and peri-urban forests in sustainable forest management in low forest cover countries in the Near East (Islamic Republic of Iran, October 2002) and Africa (Kenya, December 2002) coordinated by FAO, in collaboration with the Government of the Netherlands, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNEP and the secretariat of the Tehran Process;

(d) A Forum intersessional expert meeting on maximizing the role of planted forests in sustainable forest management (New Zealand, March 2003), hosted by the Government of New Zealand, in technical collaboration with FAO, CIFOR and IUFRO, and sponsored by Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States and ITTO;

(e) Launch of the Global Forest Landscape Restoration Partnership by IUCN, the Government of the United Kingdom and WWF, with the involvement of a number of Partnership members, including ITTO, CIFOR, UNEP/WCMC and the Forum secretariat.

76. In addition, Partnership members have carried out a number of individual activities related to forest rehabilitation and restoration over the past year. FAO supported several international meetings and workshops (i.e., on afforestation, plantations, bio-energy production systems, tropical secondary forest management). CIFOR carried out research on plantation forestry on degraded or low potential sites. GEF supported related efforts through its ecosystem management programme. IUCN worked with countries on forest landscape restoration. And UNDP, through its Dryland Development Center, has assisted many countries in developing and implementing national action plans to mitigate land degradation. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is currently developing a web site on restoration and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems.

Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs

77. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs is the focal agency for this element and prepared the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2003/8). That report provides more detail on Partnership activities in support of IPF/IFF proposals for action related to this topic, including forest-related outlook studies, such as the FAO series of global and regional outlook studies, and the UNEP *Global Environmental Outlook*. This element is cross-cutting with many other Forum elements, and many Partnership members work towards this important goal.

Financial resources

78. The World Bank and the GEF secretariat are focal agencies for this element. The Partnership's major initiative related to financial resources is the web-based sourcebook on funding for sustainable forest management (see para. 10 above).

79. In addition, a number of countries in Africa have recently reviewed their fiscal policies in the forest sector, with the support of FAO, the EU and some other Partnership members. To date, the work has resulted in more than 30 country studies and 10 thematic studies that examine some of the current issues and problems with financing sustainable forest management and present a number of proposals for reform. That work is currently being followed up by a number of Partnership partners in selected countries.

80. The World Bank plans to launch an initiative on new and innovative financing sources, with input from other Partnership members. The World Bank will prepare a paper that identifies key investment requirements and potential partnerships that can foster new and innovative financing sources. It will cover the following issues: (a) the nature and size of the current and potential financial sources; (b) the importance of utilizing the existing financial resources more effectively; (c) the conditions that must be met to attract new capital (especially private); and (d) prospective new opportunities to attract financing of global values.

81. The successful and substantial replenishment of the GEF Trust Fund, in the amount of $2,966 billion, would be used to fund activities in eligible countries in projects under GEF key focal areas. Forests are relevant to several of those projects, including projects on biodiversity, forests, land degradation and international waters.

International trade and sustainable forest management

82. ITTO, as the focal agency for this element, continues to undertake measures to promote international trade in tropical timber, including trade from sustainably managed sources. That includes studies on timber and non-timber markets and marketing, studies and projects related to processing and forest industries, activities related to timber certification and sustainable timber production and trade, and an annual review and assessment of the world timber situation. In connection with forest law enforcement, ITTO is conducting a study to assess export and import data on tropical timber and tropical timber products. ITTO is also assisting member countries, upon request, to formulate effective measures in forest law enforcement. ITTO is at the forefront in monitoring and assessing the impacts of forest and timber certification and in addressing the problem of developing countries lagging behind in the field of forest and timber certification. Furthermore, ITTO recently commissioned a study to explore the potential role of phased approaches to certification in tropical timber producing countries as a tool to promote sustainable forest management. Preparations are also under way for the convening of regional workshops on this subject in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America. In that regard, an ITTO regional workshop on phased approaches to certification (Asia and Pacific region) was held in Jakarta on 15 and 16 January 2003. In a related field, ITTO is currently developing a training package for the development of forest management auditing systems with a view to conducting training courses for trainees from member countries.

83. FAO organized a meeting in January 2003 on forest law enforcement 2002 on the theme "Reforming government policies and the fight against forest crime" with the objective of examining policy options to reduce forest crime and identifying themes for international action aimed at improving law compliance. As a follow-up to the meeting, FAO has initiated a study to explore ways to increase the contribution of corporate entities to governance in the sector. An expert consultation on the theme "Trade and sustainable forest management: impacts and interactions", was organized by FAO in Rome from 3 to 5 February 2003. The objective was to contribute to a common understanding of how current developments in trade policies impact sustainable forest management and how efforts in sustainable forest management can change trade patterns. Several Partnership members and other key international organizations attended the meeting, including ITTO, the secretariat of the Convention on Climatic Change, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

International cooperation in capacity-building, and access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies

84. International cooperation in capacity-building and the transfer of technology is an essential part of Partnership member organizations' work in support of sustainable forest management. Partnership members' activities related to this element include CIFOR dissemination of results of forest-related research and efforts to strengthen research capacity in developing countries; FAO support for regional research networks and efforts to strengthen forest education and extension systems and to establish related communities of practices; the assistance of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNDP (Capacity 2015) to developing countries in capacity-building related to socio-economic development; and the IUFRO training programme in forest research management and technology transfer, which includes the production of training material and support for the participation of developing country scientists in collaborative research networking activities and scientific conferences and meetings.

85. ITTO and the Forum secretariat supported a recent Forum country-led initiative on the transfer of environmentally sound technologies for mangrove forests. A workshop was held in Managua from 3 to 5 March 2003, sponsored by the Government of Nicaragua.

86. GEF supports capacity-building, through national capacity needs self-assessment, to address global environmental issues, in particular biodiversity, climate change and land degradation, with the aim of catalysing domestic and/or externally assisted action to meet those needs in a coordinated or planned manner.

Forest biological diversity

87. Although forest biological diversity is not a Forum element per se, there are many IPF/IFF proposals for action related to it and several Partnership members are working to enhance the conservation of forest biological diversity.

88. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is the Partnership focal point for forest biological diversity. The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, held in the Hague, from 7 to 19 April 2002, adopted an expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity, and invited Partnership members to contribute to its implementation.[8] Partnership members deem that the

Partnership provides a good mechanism to facilitate coordinated action on forest biological diversity. Several Partnership members are already involved, through their current programmes, in activities supportive of the Convention's expanded programme of work.

89. The secretariat of the Convention is preparing an analytical document, with inputs from Partnership members, that will assess the relationships between the ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management. The document will be discussed at the ninth SBSTTA meeting of the Convention, in November 2003. The Convention suggested that it also be presented to the Forum at its fourth session.

V. Linkages to other international processes

90. The year 2002 was an important year for the international forest community, with high-level forest discussions not only in the Forum, but also in the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Conferences of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; the International Tropical Timber Council and other governing bodies of Partnership member organizations. It is envisaged that the Partnership can play an important role in fostering linkages on forest-related issues among the conventions and agreements.

91. The Plan of Implementation of the Summit stresses, among other things, the key role of the Forum and the Partnership in facilitating and coordinating implementation of sustainable forest management at the national, regional and global levels. All Partnership members actively participated in the Summit and its preparation, including by organizing a side-event on the Partnership. Several members organized forest-related events in conjunction with the Summit. In addition, a number of Partnership members have joined as partners in the forest-related Partnerships that were launched at the Summit, including the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, the Asia Forest Partnership, and the Model Forest Network in Latin America and the Caribbean.

92. Furthermore, several Partnership members are more closely aligning their programmes and activities to the Millennium Development Goals that derive from the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2). Examples include the revised forest strategy for the World Bank Group, adopted in October 2002, which identifies harnessing the potential of forests to reduce poverty as one of its three founding pillars. UNDP is making the Goals an integral part of its work in the field to assist developing countries in reducing poverty, and is assisting developing countries with monitoring progress and subsequent reporting to the United Nations. One of the Goals includes the target of integrating the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reversing the loss of environmental resources. The proportion of land area covered by forests is an indicator for that target. Statistical data regarding that indicator is provided by FAO.

VI. Collaborative Partnership on Forests Network

93. The Partnership established the informal Collaborative Partnership on Forests Network in March 2002 to facilitate cooperation, interface and communication with

a wide range of other partners.[9] A second meeting of the Network was organized in The Hague in conjunction with the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.[10] Both meetings focused on the functions and the working modalities of the Network, as outlined in a Network concept paper.[11]

94. Participation in the Network is open to interested individuals and international, regional and national organizations, institutions, instruments and processes, such as regional processes, development banks, environmental and development NGOs, indigenous peoples organizations, the scientific community, private-sector entities and other major groups that work on forest-related issues. Currently the Network consists of all Partnership members, 20 intergovernmental organizations, 6 indigenous peoples organizations, 41 non-governmental organizations, 7 private-sector entities, 8 bodies representing the scientific and technical community, 2 small forest landowner associations, 1 women's organization, 1 trade union and 3 youth organizations. It is envisaged that the Network will meet in conjunction with the third session of the Forum to discuss the Network's future activities.

Notes

[1] The Partnership Framework 2002 is available on the Partnership web site at http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.

[2] Collaborative Partnership on Forests policy document, revision 1, November 2002.

[3] Reports of the Secretary-General on the economic aspects of forests (E/CN.18/2003/7); forest health and productivity (E/CN.18/2003/5); and maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs (E/CN.18/2003/8).

[4] http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.

[5] The "portal" can be accessed at http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf-mar.

[6] Reports of the two meetings are available at http://www.fao.org/forestry/fop/fopw/Climate/climate-e.asp.

[7] http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.

[8] See decision VI/22 of the Conference of the Parties, paras. 19 (a), (b), (d), (e), (f), 22, 36, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44 and 45, and annex.

[9] A summary report of the first meeting of the Network is available at http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.

[10] A summary report of the second meeting of the Network is available at http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.

[11] The Network concept paper is available at http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf.